2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifestations of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middlemen in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyin* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the market.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

sold to purchasers for extraction of major forest produce but the extent of this is very limited in Kerala, Whereas for the whole of India about 75 per cent of major forest produce is extracted by the purchasers, in Kerala only about 15 per cent of forest is extracted by the purchasers directly, the rest being entrusted to departmental extraction.

4.14 The procedure in case of sale of timber and poles is to offer them first to the Government Departments and to sell only the surplus by open auction. The result is that while the Government Departments are able to obtain timber at reasonable negotiated rates, the trade obtains timber at very heavy rates.

4.15 In case of firewood, Messrs Forest Industries (Travancore) Ltd. (F.I.T.) have been given a concession for extraction of firewood for supply to M/s Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Ltd., Alwaye. The latter are now switching on to oil and, therefore, other uses shall have to be found for firewood extracted by the F.I.T. whose concession has still to run a number of years. Firewood supplies to the main cities come from the forest coupes which are sold to purchasers in auction after extraction of the timber. No area is managed purely for raising firewood as in some other States of India.

4.16 Unlike the major forest produce whose removal is done mainly through the Government agency, extraction of minor forest produce is mostly done through the purchasers. As may be seen from Appendix 6 Government earned only Rs. 50,000 as revenue through sale of minor produce while it earned about Rs. 5 lakhs in the form of royalties from purchasers.

Silvicultural Systems

4.17 Kerala is unique in having working plans for all the Government owned forest areas in the State. Since all the Government forests are managed under the latest scientific systems, there is hardly any danger of over-felling in the public sector forests.

4.18 With a wide variety of forests, both natural and artificial, the systems of silviculture practised are suited to the types. The Selection System[1] is the one that is being applied in all the evergreen forests and only the trees of little economic importance are extracted under the simple felling rules. The complex nature of the vegetation and difficulty of regeneration of evergreen species, together with the danger of heavy wild growth have caused these forests to be worked under the Selection System.

4.19 In the other timber forests clear-felling with natural regeneration, supplemented by artificial planting, is being undertaken. The climate and soil conditions are so favourable that there is generally no difficulty in obtaining natural regeneration. The only exception, and it is quite an important one, exists in case of the evergreen forests which are being worked more and more heavily as demand for new species arises in the market. Their regeneration is not keeping pace with the removals.

[1]. Under the Selection System trees are selected for felling uniformly all over the forest. Under simple felling rules patches of forests are completely cleared in rotation irrespective of age, type or growth of trees contained in that patch.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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443 Of these paddy is mostly bought by outsiders and non-agricultural labourers, such as carpenters or blacksmiths. Most labourers
438 indeed get their wages in paddy. Metallic articles are mostly
[465] bought by blacksmiths, both in this village (to a very small extent) and by outsiders. So, too, in regard to coconut oil, gingelly oil, tobacco, sugar and all other articles, large quantities are purchased by persons coming from other villages, where there are no shops. Probably about 50 per cent of the total sales are to outsiders.

As regards the quantities of these articles consumed, the shopkeeper says that there is no difference between what is sold now and what was sold 25 years ago when the shop was started. Only the prices have risen. One or two new articles of consumption have however been introduced, e.g., coffee, the sale of which is increasing. Iron and other metallic articles began to be sold some 15 years ago and the sales are increasing, though very little is consumed in the village. Besides the articles mentioned the shop deals in sundry small articles of consumption in the village, such as medicinal products, garlic and onions (consumed by the
438 Cherumas and the lower castes), chillis, spices and the like. An important commercial product is pepper. The village produces about Rs. 2,000 worth of it and the shop buys about Rs. 1,000 worth from other villages. Very little of this is sold in the village. It is sent to the towns and commercial centres. The trade is very profitable and may be extended.

The commodities sold in the village are brought from the nearest towns or trading centres, like Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Ponnāni. The usual means of transportation are bullock carts. It does not pay to bring small quantities by railway and there is also the risk of delay and damage. The villagers also sometimes buy their clothing and other articles in towns or at the Vaniamkulam fair. About a thousand rupees worth of vegetable and garden produce is also taken to the fair in a year for sale, with the proceeds of which the villagers buy cattle and implements or commodities for consumption. The local prices of commodities are 10 per cent higher than prices in towns, about 4 per cent representing cost of carriage and the remainder interest and profit. After deducting interest on capital invested at 9 per cent, the owner of the shop makes a fair sum as wages of superintendence and profits—about Rs. 400 per annum, excluding the profits from the pepper trade which are at least as much again as this. The shop also sells paper and other articles of stationery for the use of villagers at fair prices.

435 As regards the rise in retail prices in recent years, the village accounts show a general rise in prices of nearly 100 per cent—salt alone having fallen in price. The rise is most marked in foodstuffs and other articles of immediate consumption, and in metallic articles. Betel leaves have not risen much in price. Paddy, which used to sell at 2½ to 3 paras per rupee 25 years ago, now sells at 1·2 to 1·8 or 2 paras. Oils have generally risen at least 100 per cent in 25 years. So also sugar, tobacco and the like.

•432 If one compares the total value of purchases by different classes, one will find that the many purchases of the few well-to-do persons and the few small purchases from day to day of the great majority of poor persons roughly equal one another. The Cherumas and

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village.

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer.

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day ; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one-and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days.

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters.

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and

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* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]